



## FACT SHEET:

# Domestic Violence and Revenge Porn

**Revenge Porn**, also known as **Nonconsensual Pornography (NCP)**, is defined as the distribution of sexually graphic images of individuals without their consent. It includes both images originally obtained without consent (e.g., hidden cameras, hacking phones or online accounts, or recording sexual assaults), as well as images consensually obtained within the context of an intimate relationship.<sup>1</sup>

The following 38 states, along with Washington, D.C., have adopted legislation to criminalize Revenge Porn/NCP. Rhode Island is not yet among them:

Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

A single act of posting explicit images can cause significant harm to a victim, impacting their mental health, relationships, and career. Images are often posted alongside personally-identifying information about the victim, which often leads to additional harassment and threats from third parties.

- According to a study by the Cyber Civil Rights Initiative:<sup>2</sup>
  - 51% of victims of Revenge Porn/NCP have had suicidal thoughts due to being victimized.
  - 93% of victims said they have suffered significant emotional distress due to being a victim.
  - 82% said they suffered significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning due to being a victim.
  - 42% sought out psychological services due to being a victim.
  - 90% of victims were women.

**Revenge Porn/NCP should be against the law in Rhode Island, in the same way that domestic violence and other related forms of violence and abuse have already been criminalized.**

- Revenge Porn/NCP is frequently associated with the following crimes:<sup>3</sup>
  - **Domestic violence:** Revenge Porn/NCP can be used as an abusive tactic of power and control in a domestic violence situation. Many people who are controlling and abusive during a relationship are also aggressive and destructive after a relationship. Revenge Porn/NCP images or videos may have been originally created within the context of an abusive relationship as a result of coercion by the abuser.
  - **Sexual assault:** Revenge Porn/NCP images or videos may document a sexual assault or its aftermath.
  - **Harassment, stalking, and cyberstalking:** Many Revenge Porn/NCP offenders harass victims through unwelcome texts, emails, phone calls, letters, visits to the victim's home or workplace, contact with the victim's friends, family, or colleagues, etc. The offender's persistent conduct online and/or offline may cause the victim to fear for their safety.

<sup>1</sup>FAQ. (2017). Cyber Civil Rights Initiative. Retrieved from <https://www.cybercivilrights.org/faqs>.

<sup>2</sup>End Revenge Porn. (2014). Revenge Porn Statistics. Retrieved from <https://www.cybercivilrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/RPStatistics.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup>Related Laws. (2017). Cyber Civil Rights Initiative. Retrieved from <https://www.cybercivilrights.org/related-laws>.